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Identical letters dated 4 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter setting out the position of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning the seventh report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja`afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 4 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The Syrian Arab Republic has always stressed its desire to cooperate with the United Nations in all areas and emphasized how important it is for that Organization to be an international forum that addresses all issues on an equal footing without selectivity or double standards. Having examined the seventh semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2008/264), we declare the following:

The seventh report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) contained in the above-mentioned document goes well beyond the mandate of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) as set out in the resolution itself. It addresses issues that are unrelated to the resolution including, for example, the question of who did or did not attend the Arab summit, which is not the concern of the United Nations but rather an internal matter of the League of Arab States, a regional organization.

It is illogical to base a report that is supposed to be neutral, objective and intended to help extricate Lebanon from the difficult situation it is experiencing, on the point of view of a single Lebanese party without taking into account the points of view of other Lebanese parties. The Lebanese political system is based on the principle of consensus among all recognized constituencies. The report also reflects the personal point of view of Terje Roed-Larsen, who persists in trying to politicize his reports in order to make it appear that the Syrian Arab Republic is behind all the problems and crises occurring in Lebanon, which he does at the behest of well-known regional and international parties, while deliberately neglecting to mention all that Syria has done to establish security and stability in Lebanon.

The Syrian Arab Republic again stresses that it is implementing all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), a fact recognized by the Security Council and evidence of which is provided by the report itself in paragraph 12. We also reaffirm what was stated in a letter dated 19 October 2007 from the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General to the effect that diplomatic relations and the demarcation of borders between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon are questions of national sovereignty to be settled by agreement between the Syrian Government and a Lebanese Government which, unlike the current Lebanese Government, does not set itself up as an enemy of the Syrian Arab Republic.

In his speech to the Arab Summit in Damascus, the President of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirmed Syria's concern over and desire for the independence and stability of Lebanon. In his recent meeting with the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, the President reaffirmed Syria's readiness to cooperate with any Arab or non-Arab efforts, on the basis of an Arab initiative or any other initiative based on a platform of national reconciliation, the only platform that can bring stability to Lebanon.

We expect representatives of the United Nations to work towards easing tensions in relations between Member States, and not to manufacture problems or fuel existing disputes between them. Some are trying to damage relations between the fraternal countries of Syria and Lebanon. That is what is happening in the report submitted to the Security Council. No other party or country has done as much for the stability, sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and people of Lebanon as the Syrian Arab Republic. Syria does not wish to involve itself in Lebanon's internal affairs, as do certain others, because it believes that existing problems require dialogue among Lebanese without outside interference of any kind. The role of outside parties should be limited to encouraging the Lebanese parties to reach consensus among themselves in order to arrive at solutions that will serve Lebanon now and in the future.

Finally, the Syrian Arab Republic would like to reaffirm the need for all to respect not only the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon but also the people of that country and to respect Syria's desire to establish the best possible relations with Lebanon and resolve all outstanding problems between the two countries, provided that the Lebanese Government also so desires.